

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Do you have any comments to make about Section 1 of the environmental report?

Section 1.3

We recommend that the natural environment is considered not only as the physical system in which users of the marine area are active, but also in the context of those who seek and have aspirations for the protection, enhancement and sustainable management of the areas natural resource.

In this context, there are a number of bodies, including environmental NGOs, who should be included as 'users' of the marine area and marine spatial plan (MSP).

Do you have any comments to make about Section 2 of the environmental report?

Table 2.1 – Biodiversity

In this section there is a need to identify the current knowledge gaps that exist in our understanding of marine flora and fauna in this area, as is the case across many parts of UK waters. Distribution of habitats and species, behavioural ecology and responses to human activities all require further research to better inform marine spatial planning and decision making.

Reference should then be made to the prioritised list of actions that are being taken to respond to these gaps. Including the first steps at designating marine protected areas and the need for further sites and species to be protected to achieve an ecologically coherent network. Setting out the need for robust science and monitoring requirements to inform this process should also be set out/ referred to.

In all cases within this table the term 'sustainable economic growth' should be removed and replaced with 'economic growth' OR 'sustainable development'.

Section 2.7: Biodiversity – Key Environmental Problems

This section should also include disease, competition and extinction.

Section 2.11: Population & Human Health – Key Enviro Problems

This section should also include disease and poisoning caused by invasive non-native species (INNS).

Section 2.12: Water - Key Environmental Problems

Could this also refer to the potential impacts from activities in terrestrial environment having an effect on the marine and coastal water quality?

Do you have any comments to make about Section 3 of the environmental report?

Table 3.1: Potential Effects of growth of offshore renewables –

Bullet 2 could be extended to include potential effects on hydrodynamics and therefore indirect impacts on highly dynamic priority habitats.

Do you have any comments to make about Section 4 of the environmental report?

Do you have any comments to make about Section 5 of the environmental report?

Mitigation and monitoring recommendations:

The marine planning process should be flexible and able to adapt to new environmental findings that increase understanding and that may require changes in the plan. This ability to adapt should be included in this section as it will contribute to the avoidance of impacts and enhancement of the marine environment.

Do you have any general comments to make about the environmental report?

Yes No
